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BROWN PATCH OF TURF GRASSES

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The disease brown patch, caused by Rhizoctonia solani Kuehn., is a serious problem on both home lawns and golf greens where the grass is clipped closely. When conditions are favorable for the development of the fungus with air temperature from 80 to 85 F, large areas of grass can be blighted within 6 to 8 hrs. The principal hosts of the brown patch fungus are bentgrass, Agrostis sp. L., bermuda grass, Cynodon dactylon (L.) Pers., centipede grass, Eremochloa ophiuroides (Hunro) Hack., St. Augustine grass, Stenotaphrum secundatum (Walt.) Kuntze, and Zoysia grass, Zoysia sp. Willd.

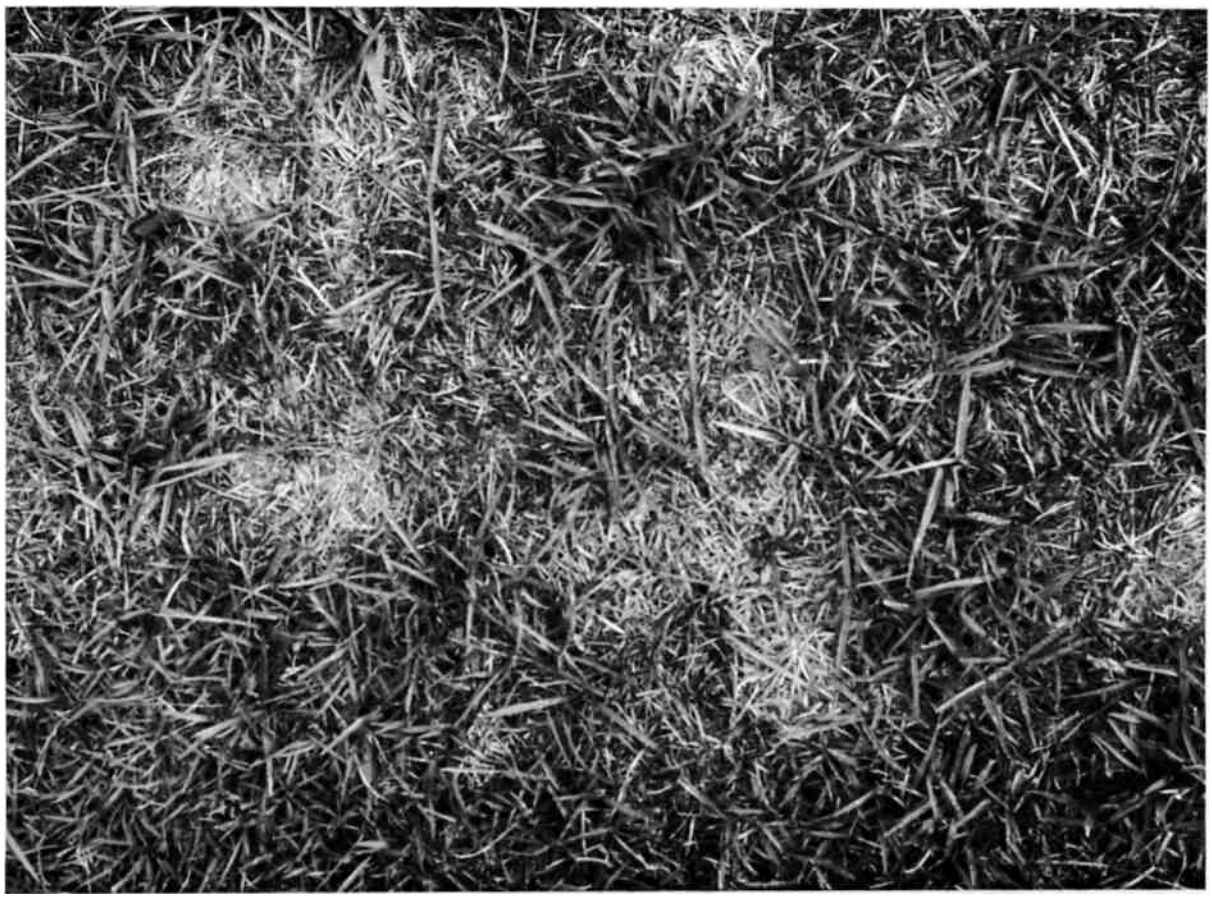

Fig. 1. Development of brown patch on established turf.

SYMPTOMS. The diseased areas usually appear as brown patches of blighted grass ranging from a few inches to many feet in diameter (Fig. 1). During humid weather the diseased areas may be bordered by dark greyish-purple rings which are prominent in early morning but fade later in the day. If patches are examined while dew is still on the grass, a cobweb-like mycelium can be found along with small brown sclerotia. Grass in blighted areas is readily pulled out because of the damage to the crown and roots.

CONTROL. Fungicides recommended for brown patch control include Kromad, 3 oz. per 25 gal or Tersan, 4 oz. per 25 gal (1) applied to 1000 sq. ft. of turf. Fungicides should be applied when the first symptoms are observed and continued at 7-10 day intervals until control is obtained.

Reference Used:

Freeman, T. E. 1957. Turf Problems and Their Control. Mimeo. Compiled by the Research Group of the State Turfgrass Advisory Committee.